1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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this is done by them in isolated cases only; they use a round, low bowl or *batea*, in which they place some of the auriferous sand together with some water. Then, whirling the *batea* rapidly, a feathery stream of mingled sand and water flows constantly over the edge. When the sand is nearly all exhausted, the bowl is filled again, and this process is repeated a number of times. Finally a little deposit of grains of gold will be found at the bottom.

These Indians have no name in their own language for either gold or silver, but they call these precious metals "yellow money" and "white money" respectively. Their word for money (M. and T.: *lala;* P. and U.: *lihwan*) might have designated gold originally, or perhaps metal in general. Still, there is a native name for iron or steel (M. and T.: *silak;* P. and U.: *yasama*).

Cheap bracelets, earrings, and finger rings of foreign origin are now very common among both tribes. The iron and steel objects, which are now in universal use on the coast, have not been cast or forged locally, but have been obtained in trade. Harpoons are made from our common triangular files with the aid of another file. This process is very slow and tedious. The iron points or "heads" for arrows and spears are generally made from old cask hoops or from other scrap iron.

STONEWORK

METATES.—Stonework is practically limited to the manufacture of crude metates or maize grinders (M.: *walpa-akbaya;* T., P.: *ki-watak;* U.: *ki-tiknaka*) which are used for grinding maize, cacao, or other grains or fruits. They are merely plane slabs of a tufflike rock with a slightly concave grinding surface, on which the grains are crushed with the aid of a handle or metlapil (M.: *walpa-mihta;* S.: *ki-mak*). These crude metates are made with the aid of a hard blackish stone chisel (M.: *kwa-siksa;*[37] T., P.: *pransa, paransa;* U.: *ki-tisna*).

ANTIGUALES.—Elaborate metates, cylindrical bowls and mortars of a hard granitelike material are occasionally found on the Mosquito Coast. Isolated specimens of these articles are met with, but as a rule they are found in deposits from miniature size, perhaps children's toys, to giant sizes for ceremonial purposes. These objects exist in all stages of manufacture, but the finished product is now very scarce, having either been taken away or broken.

Such old sites or "antiguales," as they are known locally, are especially numerous in Honduras between the rivers Plátano and Paulaya; they are found generally on some elevated spot within a

[37] At Ciudad Antigua, in the Nicaraguan department of Nueva Segovia, I heard this tool called "cuabul" (=*kwa-bul*) by the Spanish-speaking inhabitants. In the Miskito language *sikse* means "black," while *bul* is "mottled" or "speckled."

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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short distance from a small creek. A picture of one of these sites is given by Spinden (536). Occasionally these antiguales are surrounded by low walls, perhaps remains of former fortifications; others again were apparently defended by ditches and perhaps by palisades also. 324 172

ANCIENT METATES.—The metates found in these deposits are supported by three long, well-centered legs, which are generally covered with geometric designs; in front there is a bird or animal head (eagle, turtle, alligator, or jaguar). The Indians occasionally dig them up to be used in their households. Some fine specimens have been broken by man or by falling trees. Giant metates, which may reach over 6 feet in length, are still found, but the sculptured head has generally been removed from them. They remind us of the wooden stools still found in the Indian dwellings and it is very likely that they were used as ceremonial seats. In the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, there is a metate from the Mosquito Coast (Hodge: 56). Several large specimens from an important site discovered near Cuera Hill (to the south of Pearl Lagoon) about 30 years ago upon clearing the land for making banana plantations are in the American Museum of Natural History. The Peabody Museum of Harvard University also owns a few metates from the vicinity of Bluefields. [531]

ANCIENT BOWLS.—Cylindrical bowls with three short legs and made from a very hard granitelike rock are also found in the above-mentioned old sites, but they are less common than the metates. Two knobs near the rim, carved into bird or animal heads, serve as handles. These bowls or vases are ornamented with geometric motives, of which the most common is the incised guilloche, or rope pattern, of either curvilinear or angular construction.

The first description, accompanied with illustrations, of these "granite vases" from the Mosquito Coast is given by Pownall (318–324, pl. XXVI), who figures three of these objects. Two of these belonged to Lord Hillsborough. One of these latter (No. 1) is very small and has an animal head on one side. The larger one (No. 2) is more interesting; it is about 12 to 15 inches in diameter and 10 inches in height, with plain legs. There are two rows of diamond-shaped ornaments on the body of the vessel; the two handles take the form of a head and a tail, but the head is partly broken off. The third vessel (No. 3) is about 10 to 12 inches in diameter and height, but at the top it is somewhat narrower; it has carved legs and two head ornaments and is perhaps the best specimen in good condition found in the country. The bowls No. 2 and No. 3 have been reproduced by Humboldt (I, p. 238, and II, pl. 39) and by Dupaix (I, div. II, 27–28, and II, suppl. pl. VII, No. 1). The illustration of No. 3 has been copied also by Bancroft (IV, 26).

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324 172 Pownall (319) refers to another of these bowls in the British Museum, which belonged to a collection brought from Jamaica by Sir Hans Sloane. This is perhaps the one depicted by Joyce (p. 74, pl. VI, fig. 1) which resembles No. 3 described above.

In 1921 the writer found a number of these vessels, but all badly broken up, on the right bank of Rio Paulaya. Some of them were not detached from the quarry out of which they were formed. It is, however, not known from what site the marble was quarried. Bowls of similar material and technique have also been met with in the Bay Islands and in the valley of Rio Ulua. A large specimen is in the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation (Hodge: 56).

532 172 STATUES OR CARVED PILLARS.—At certain old sites may be found some high slabs of stone which were originally placed upright, reminding one of our tombstones. Nearly all of them have now tumbled down. Occasionally some greatly obliterated geometric designs, or spirals, may be found on them.[28]

Spinden (539) pictures a stela or stone pillar on Rio Tocomacho (Honduras) which is 8 feet in height and nearly a foot square. It is covered on all sides with pictographic designs, chiefly spirals and scrolls; on one of the four faces there is a grotesque figure with a reptilelike creature on its head. Such stone pillars may also be found in other parts of the Mosquito Coast, but they are not common. Large stone statues, attaining as great a height as 12 feet, are, however, the outstanding feature of the archeology of the Pacific half of Nicaragua, especially of the great lake region.

Le Baron (217–222) describes and depicts some stone ruins from the left bank of Rio Prinsapolca, about 134 miles above its mouth. They consist of three monoliths, about 8 feet high, forming a triangle; the ground between them was paved with stones. These monoliths had fallen to the ground and were broken; on some of the faces there were rude carvings, greatly obliterated.

CARVED ROCKS

212 172 Pictographs may be found on the rocks in the bed of nearly all the larger streams, generally at the rapids and falls. They must have been made many centuries ago, for they are considerably waterworn, and often may be followed easier with the finger than with the naked eye. Many of these carved rocks are visible during the dry season only and are completely under water during the rainy months, owing to the rise of the rivers. (Fig. 1.)

WHERE THEY ARE FOUND.—Such carved rocks have been observed by the present writer at different places on the Rio Coco (at Wirapani,

[28] The modern Indians have no traditions concerning these ruins found in their territory, and ascribe them to the evil spirits.